

## **ABSTRACT**

**CREATIVE PROJECT:** The Current State of Affairs and Bioethical Issues

Associated with Genetic Orphans

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Infertility affects roughly 10-15% of couples around the world and affects both males and females. It is a growing concern for the public that has been answered through the advent of new Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ARTs). These procedures allow people dealing with infertility to still have children. The most common technique is in vitro fertilization (IVF). Surrogacy is another option involving the gestation of a fetus by a third party. It is often used in conjunction with ARTs. While these advances have made the creation of families easier, they have also generated many new challenges. One of these issues is donor anonymity which is currently under fire, as it questions whether children with donor biological parents should be allowed access to that information. Another issue is the decision to disclose or not disclose the methods of conception to the child which is presently a matter of opinion and controversy. A third issue involves what to do with cryopreserved embryos created by ART procedures, given that there are three possible options: 1) use in

research, 2) disposal, or 3) donation to another infertile patient. Finally, there is the issue of genetic orphans, those individuals conceived using donor egg and sperm and reared by people with no genetic relation with the child. The existence of genetic orphans now calls into question a range of ethical issues from the meaning of motherhood to the ethics of designer babies. Research on the aforementioned issues is presented including insights gained through interviews with two genetic counselors, an embryologist, and a director of counseling psychology.